

Mr. Perkins's
L E T T E R

T O

Mr. Cornwell,

And other

M I N I S T E R S

A T

Tunbridge-wells,

Who denied him the Use of the Pulpit there.

And have not Answered the Letter, as desired.

L O N D O N

Printed, and Sold by J. Bradford in New-street without Bishopsgate.

W. Musgrave.

*Mr. Perkins's Letter to Mr. Cornwell and
other Ministers at Tunbridge-wells, &c.*

Reverend Sir,

I cannot blame you much for denying me the use of your Pulpit, since you did it not of your own accord, but by the Instigation of other Clergy-men, with whom you consulted, and who dissuaded you, by telling you that *I should make some begging Business of it*. I desired to know who they were that had thus, advised you, whom you thought not fit to Inform me of. But because you know them, I desire you to ask them, How they knew *I should make a Begging Business of it*? Whether having Preached above 1000 times, I ever yet Preached a Begging Sermon I never yet did. But this I confess, I have sometimes commended Charity and good Works [*not that I spake in respect of Want; or, that I desired it should be so done unto me,* But] for the Temporal Good of the Poor Receivers, and the Eternal Good of the Rich Givers, without any the least Respect to the present Gain to my self. If I must Proclaim my own Praises, they ought to Pardon my Boasting, who by their False Accusations have compelled me thereunto. Be it known therefore to all Men by these Presents, that I *Joseph Perkins* did lately offer to the Church

wardens, &c. of the Parish of *White-Chappel* to Preach there [Memoriter] once or twice every Lord's-day in the Year [Gratis] as my Kinsman *Perkins* did in *Cambridge*, and as Christ has Commanded us [Freely ye have received, freely give] that so they might be more Encouraged, and the better Enabled to Relieve the Poor among them: The *Parsonage* being worth (as is Reported) six or seven Hundred Pounds a Year. And lest it should be thought that I expected, notwithstanding, some great Gratuity by the By, I declared further that I would never take any Reward of them, either Openly or Secretly, either Directly or Indirectly; but get my Living (as *St. Paul* sometimes did) by my own Art and Industry: And hereof I have Witness, and hereunto I have long since put my hand and seal. Therefore I am no *Begging* Preacher, except I Begg for others; And this I was Resolved on before, that if I Preached at the *Wells*, and Money should be given me, to give it all entirely to the *Poors* Box, and not play *Ananias* part in keeping back any the least part of the Price, notwithstanding I am very Poor my self. But are not these Men *Uncharitable* in *Censuring* me thus? Charity thinks no Evil. I had need therefore to Preach a Lecture of *Charity* to my Brethren, to keep them from *Rash* and *Uncharitable Judging*. But they think, and some have called me a *Vagabond*, &c. I answer, that so many of them have gotten *Pluralities*, that many others (perhaps as well Deserving as themselves

selves) must be content to go without any. But then
 they'll tell me, that I may easily get a *Readers Place*,
 which is better than to run about the *Country* with my
Poetry. I answer, that those *Doctors* and *Bishops*
 that cannot *Preach without Book*, are the fittest to make
Readers of, and those to whom *God* has been *Pleas'd*
 to give the *Gifts of Memory and Utterance*, are fit-
 test for the *Pulpit* (*Ex quo vis ligno non fit Mercurius*)
 But he is a *poor Man*, say they, and therefore not fit
 to *Preach* before *great Ones*. Very right; for (saith
Solomon) *The poor Mans Wisdom is despised, and his*
Words are not heard. Perhaps, if I had been a *Bishop*,
 I had been as fitly qualified to *Preach* before a *Prin-*
cess as an *Irish Bishop*. But I did not desire to *take*
 the *Pulpit* before these *Reverend Readers*; some of
 whom I have heard speak very slightly of *Preaching*
without Book: But I refer all those (and all those too
 that speak *Contemptibly of Latin Poetry*) for an
Answer to the Fables of the Fox and the Grapes,
 and the *Fox without a Tail*. But what foul *Injustice*
 is this, for *Clergy-men* by their *Pluralities* and *Co-*
vetousness to force their *Underling-Curates* to be
Poor, and then to *Upbraid* them with their *Poverty*,
 to force them to turn *Poets*, and then *Jeer* them for
 writing *School-Boys Exercise*! But how is it possible
 for me to be *Rich*, who have been almost five *Years*
 in a *service*, and abused at *Sea* for discovering of
Thieft, worse than a *Slave in Turkey*, without a *Penny*
 of *Wages*, having withal a *Charge of Children*? But
 what

what if I am Poor, and go about ? So did my Brother *Homer* ; so did Christ and his Disciples go about doing good, and Lived by *Alms*, and *Judas* carried the *Bag*, and Christ himself was so poor that he had not where to hide his Head. But 'tis no wonder that a Prophet (that is) a Poet, has no Honour in his own Country. And those that Despise me for my Poverty, let them know, that *he that Despiseth the Poor, Reproacheth his Maker*. But possibly they that hindred me from the Duty, think they can do it better themselves. I answer, They have a good *Opinion* of themselves, and is Inconsistent with *Modesty* and *Humility*, which teaches us to *Esteem* others *better* than our selves. But what if some of these *Reverend Readers* should think that if my *Candle* should be set up on the *Candlestick*, it would Eclipse the Light of theirs, and therefore would still keep it under a *Bushel*, or put it quite out, if they could ; just as the *Indian Queen*, who being Black, and deformed her self, would admit of none that were Fair and Comly in her Court and Service, lest *Joan* should be preferred before my Lady. O Injustice ! The Labourer is worthy of his hire ; But you will not let him Labour, that so he may have no Plea for his Hire ; you will not suffer the Ox to tread out the Corn, that so you may have a fair pretence for muzzling up his Mouth. But whoever they are that have *hindred* me from Preaching, I desire them, when they Read the Exhortation before the receiving of the Communion, seriously to Consider

sider of these words. Therefore if any of you be a
Hinlerer or a *Slanderer* of God's Word, or be in *Envy*
 or *Malice*, or *Guilty* of any other grievous Crime, *Repent*
ye, or else come not to this Holy Sacrament. And more-
 over let all those my secret Accusers know, that by
 Slandering me and my Doctrine, to the prejudice
 of the Gospel, they do withal cast a foul *Aspersi*on on
 all those Seven Lords a Dean and Chancellor, by Te-
 stifying *contrary* to what all these, and many other Per-
 sons of *Honour* and Reputation have both Testified
 and are ready to Testifie. Therefore let them look to
 it, that thus impudently without any ground, fling
 Dirt in the Faces of, and give the Lie, to many of the
 Nobility and Clergy, who have Honoured me with
 as good Testimonials as any of my Adversaries can
 produce. But lastly, if my Accusers spake Truth, and
 their Complaint were just, what need they to conceal
 their Names? This is the worst kind of Slandering
 (saith the Author of *The whole Duty of Man*) for by
 Whispering a Mans good Name is stolen from him,
 and he can never find out the Thief. But he that
 knows the Author of an ill Report, and will not in-
 form the injur'd Person, is thereby become an *Abet-*
tor to those *Murderers*, and a *Receiver* to those *Thieves*,
 and are both equally *Criminal*; against whom this
 Curse is threatned, *Wo be to him that smiteth his Neigh-*
bour secretly. I am sorry that you should be so ready
 to believe Evil of me, as to set your Ears wide open
 to the Detractions of my secret Enemies. You should
 do

do much better (as *Bishop Sanderson* saith) to suspect him as an Imp of *Satan* that delights so much in doing *Satans Business*, in being an *Accuser* of the *Brethren*.

Farewel.

*Semper Ego Auditor tantu? nunquamne reponam
vexatus toties? Juvenal.*

In Concionatores quosdam Mercenarios.

* *Haleus* *
Jakelus,
Ec.

Burchius Argento conductus *Rostro* sagitat :
Præmia si tollas, *Burchius* Ille silet.

Ab! *Te facundum fuv* spes reddidit auri :

Hac demptâ, *taciti Piscis* ad instar eris.

Histrion, Tibicines, Cantores, Caufidicique :

Hi vocem vendunt : Presbyterique pij.

Unicus at Vates Contemptius Ridiculasque

*Officium tantum, *Præmia nulla petir.*

* *Quis enim*
virtutem am-
plectitur ip-
sam Præmia
si tollas? Ju-
venal

Sol non conductus præbet sua lumina Mundo :

Et non conductus munere fungor Ego.

August Secundo, Sole vix exorto.

Perkins.

On the Mercenary Preachers, in English thus,

With Bribes of Silver *Burch* is *Hir'd* to Preach :
Take away those and he'll no longer Teach.

Alas 'tis Money makes him Eloquent ;

His Voice is gone, when Golden Hopes are spent.

Actors and Fiddlers, Songsters, Pleadors do

Their Voices sell, and so do Preachers too.

One Prophet Vile and Scorned has Regard

To th' Office only : Not to the Reward.

The Suns bright Flames to Mortals freely Shine ;

And, whilst I Preach for nothing, so do mine.

Perkins.

Loripedem rectus derideat : Æthiopem Albus. Juvenal.